

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG. PFOR, EEC, EI

SUBJ: IRISH FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS COMMENT ON EC-US
MISUNDERSTANDING

SUMMARY: COMMENTS BY BOTH PERMSEC HUGH MCCANN AND PERMSEC-
DESIGNATE PAUL KEATING REFLECT SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FOR AND SYMPATHY
WITH FRENCH ATTITUDES ON THE CURRENT EC-US MISUNDERSTANDING OVER
EC DECISION ON COOPERATION WITH THE ARABS. THE IRISH WONDER WHETHER
THE UNITED STATES REACTION IS EVIDENCE OF A DETERMINATION EITHER
TO DOMINATE OR DRIVE THE COMMUNITY APART.

1. DURING WEEK-END LUNCH WITH CHARGE SORENSON, HUGH MCCANN AND
PAUL KEATING SAID THEY WERE "SURPRISED AND AMAZED" AT THE "LATEST
TEMPEST" OVER EC DECISION ON COOPERATION WITH THE ARABS. STRESSING
THAT IRELAND WAS ON THE PERIPHERY OF SUCH MATTERS, MCCANN AND
KEATING SAID THAT THE IMPRESSION EVERYONE HAD DURING THE MEETING OF
FOREIGN MINISTERS WAS THE EC INTENTIONS HAD BEEN THOROUGHLY
DISCUSSED WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER BY BOTH SCHEEL AND DOUGLAS-HOME,
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NEITHER OF WHOM BELIEVED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD ANY SIGNIFICANT PRO-

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WITH THE COMMUNITY'S PLANS. IT WAS BECAUSE OF THIS THAT THE MINISTERS DEALT WITH THE QUESTION SO EXPEDITIOUSLY DURING THEIR MARCH 4 MEETING.

2. CHARGE RECALLED THAT EMBASSY HAD ADVISED THE GOI AND OTHER EC MEMBERS OVER A WEEK AGO OF OUR CONCERN OVER ANY EC APPROACH TO THE ARAB COUNTRIES. MCCANN AND KEATING AGREED, BUT SAID THEIR IMPRESSION WAS THAT THIS VIEW HAD BEEN OVERTAKEN BY SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND SCHEEL. THE U.S. REACTION, THEY SAID, HAD TAKEN EVERYONE QUITE UNAWARE. KEATING SAID THAT EFFECT OF ALL THIS WAS A KIND OF PULLING AND HAULING ON THE COMMUNITY THAT LEFT EVERYONE WONDERING WHERE THEY STOOD AND WHAT AMERICAN INTENTIONS REALLY WERE. HE SAID IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF PEOPLE BECAME CONVINCED THAT THE U.S. WAS DETERMINED EITHER TO DOMINATE THE COMMUNITY OR DRIVE IT APART.

3. CHARGE REPLIED THAT WE DID NOT WISH TO DOMINATE, BUT TO COOPERATE, WHICH WAS WHY WE WERE TRYING SO HARD TO DEVELOP A DIALOGUE AND THIS WAS HARD TO DO WHEN EVEN OUR FRIENDS WOULDN'T CONSULT WITH US. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS, HOWEVER, CHARGE MADE NO FURTHER COMMENT ON EC DECISION.

4. COMMENT: AS IN MANY EARLIER CONVERSATIONS, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE IRISH ARE COMMITTED BOTH INTELLECTUALLY AND EMOTIONALLY TO ATTITUDES SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE FRENCH. TO A CERTAIN EXTENT THIS REFLECTS THE FRANCOPHILISM OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER, GARRET FITZGERALD, AS WELL AS OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, HUGH MCCANN, WHO WILL LEAVE NEXT MONTH TO BECOME IRISH AMBASSADOR IN PARIS. MCCANN'S SUCCESSOR, PAUL KEATING, WE BELIEVE WILL APPROACH ISSUES AS PERMANENT SECRETARY WITH LESS EMOTIONAL BIAS. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF IRELAND'S LACK OF DIPLOMATIC EXPERIENCE AS A SMALL COUNTRY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF BRITAIN, THE ABSENCE OF ANY DEFENSE COMMITMENTS OR SHARED WARTIME EXPERIENCES WITH THE US AND FINALLY THE SIMILARITY IN THE EC OF IRISH AND FRENCH AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS, WE CAN EXPECT KEATING TO TAKE A FAIRLY INDEPENDENT LINE. ONE WAY IN WHICH WE MIGHT HOPE TO IMPROVE OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE IRISH WOULD BE THROUGH MORE CAREFULLY CULTIVATING THE FOREIGN MINISTER, GARRET FITZGERALD, WHO CONTINUES TO SMART FROM HIS APPARENT INABILITY

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TO ARRANGE A PERSONAL MEETING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER (THIS WAS AGAIN REFERRED TO BY MCCANN DURING THE LUNCH). WE URGE THAT THE DEPARTMENT BE ALERT TO ANY OPPORTUNITY TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IT COULD PAY HANDSOME DIVIDENDS. SORENSON

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